

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 15838

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN, PK

SUBJECT: INDO-PAK TALKS ON CIVIL AVIATION

REF: ISLAMABAD 11081

SUMMARY: THE INDIAN SIDE FOUND THE ATMOSPHERE AT THE INDIA-PAKISTAN CIVIL AVIATION TALKS IN ISLAMABAD ENCOURAGING, EVEN IF NO AGREEMENT WAS REACHED. TALKS WILL PROBABLY RESUME IN LATE DECEMBER OR EARLY JANUARY. MEANWHILE, THERE IS PROGRESS IN EXCHANGE OF DETAINEES AND PILGRIMS. TRADE TALKS BEGIN NOVEMBER 26 IN DELHI. ONE INDIAN OFFICIAL NOTED POINTEDLY THAT THIS PROGRESS CONTINUES IN SPITE OF
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BHUTTO'S PERIODIC TOUGH STATEMENTS. END SUMMARY.

1. KIRAN DOSHI, THE DEPUTY SECRETARY IN THE PAKISTAN DIVISION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WHO ACCOMPANIED THE INDIAN DELEGATION TO ISLAMABAD, TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER NOVEMBER 25 THAT THE ATMOSPHERE AT THE NOVEMBER 18-22 CIVIL AVIATION TALKS IN ISLAMABAD WAS "CORDIAL, EVEN FRIENDLY." DOSHI EXPRESSED OPTIMISM ABOUT THE ULTIMATE SUCCESS OF THE TALKS. ALTHOUGH SOME ISSUES REMAINED UNRESOLVED ON RE-ESTABLISHING AIR LINKS, OVERFLIGHTS PRESENTED THE MAIN PROBLEM, HE SAID. DOSHI NOTED THAT THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME THE TWO SIDES HAD SAT ACROSS A TABLE TO DISCUSS THE WHOLE OVERFLIGHT ISSUE--THE HIJACKING OF AN INDIAN AIRCRAFT TO PAKISTAN IN JANUARY 1971 AND THE RESULTING INDIAN BAN ON OVERFLIGHTS BETWEEN THEN EAST AND WEST PAKISTAN. INDIA WANTED PAKISTAN TO WITHDRAW ITS CASE BEFORE ICAO WHILE THE TWO PARTIES SOUGHT A BILATERAL SOLUTION; PAKISTAN WANTED TO RESERVE ITS RIGHT TO CONTINUE THE CASE AT ICAO. MUCH TIME WAS SPENT IN STATING POSITIONS RATHER THAN NEGOTIATING. DOSHI BELIEVED THAT ANOTHER FOUR OR FIVE DAYS MIGHT HAVE PRODUCED AN AGREEMENT. AS IT IS, THE TWO SIDES WILL MEET AGAIN AT THE END OF DECEMBER OR IN JANUARY.

2. OTHER PROGRESS: DOSHI NOTED THAT INDIA AND PAKISTAN WOULD COMPLETE BY DECEMBER 13 THE EXCHANGE OF EACH OTHER'S CITIZENS DETAINED BEFORE THE 1971 WAR. THIS HAD REQUIRED A REAL EFFORT BY BOTH SIDES--PAKISTAN HAD AT INDIAN INSISTENCE TRACED ALL BUT 15 OF THE 106 DETAINEES WHO HAD BEEN UNACCOUNTED FOR, WHILE THE INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD PERSUADED THE HOME MINISTRY TO ACCEPT THE SWISS CATEGORIZATION AS "PRE-WAR DETAINEES" OF ABOUT 80 PAKISTANIS CAPTURED DECEMBER 17, 1971. INDIA AND PAKISTAN ARE NOW EXCHANGING LISTS OF "POST-WAR" DETAINEES AND WILL PROBABLY BEGIN EXCHANGING SOME PEOPLE EARLY NEXT YEAR. (INDIA APPARENTLY WANTS TO LIMIT EXCHANGES TO THOSE CAPTURED SOME TIME AGO, SUCH AS IN 1972.) DOSHI ALSO NOTED THAT THE FIRST 300 TO 400 SIKH PILGRIMS WILL VISIT PAKISTAN THIS WEEK, AND SOME 1,000 PAKISTANI CHRISTIAN PILGRIMS WILL VISIT GOA LATER THIS YEAR.

3. IN GENERAL, DOSHI THOUGHT HE COULD SEE A PATTERN EMERGING IN WHICH BHUTTO TALKS TOUGH, AS HE DID IN HIS SPEECH AT
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RAFIQUI AIR FORCE BASE DURING THE CIVIL AVIATION TALKS (LAHORE 1519), BUT PAKISTAN NEGOTIATES CONSTRUCTIVELY ON SPECIFIC ISSUES. THE GOI IS BEGINNING TO ACCEPT THIS PATTERN AND TO BECOME LESS EXCITED EVERY TIME BHUTTO SPEAKS, HE SAID.
MOYNIHAN

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